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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/530,055	11/23/2005	Thierry Starck	40770-000166/US	6269

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EXAMINER	
HE, AMY	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2858	

DATE MAILED: 04/24/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/530,055	STARCK ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Amy He	2858	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) 1-4,6 and 7 is/are rejected.

7)☒ Claim(s) 5 is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 April 2005 is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☒ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/4/05 and 7/20/05.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ .
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

(1) Content of Specification

(a) Title of the Invention: See 37 CFR 1.72(a) and MPEP § 606. The title of the invention should be placed at the top of the first page of the specification unless the title is provided in an application data sheet. The title of the invention should be brief but technically accurate and descriptive, preferably from two to seven words may not contain more than 500 characters.

(b) Cross-References to Related Applications: See 37 CFR 1.78 and MPEP § 201.11.

(c) Statement Regarding Federally Sponsored Research and Development: See MPEP § 310.

(d) The Names Of The Parties To A Joint Research Agreement: See 37 CFR 1.71(g).

(e) Incorporation-By-Reference Of Material Submitted On a Compact Disc: The specification is required to include an incorporation-by-reference of electronic documents that are to become part of the permanent United States Patent and Trademark Office records in the file of a patent application. See 37 CFR 1.52(e) and MPEP § 608.05. Computer program listings (37 CFR 1.96(c)), "Sequence Listings" (37 CFR 1.821(c)), and tables having more than 50 pages of text were permitted as electronic documents on compact discs beginning on September 8, 2000.

Or alternatively, Reference to a "Microfiche Appendix": See MPEP § 608.05(a). "Microfiche Appendices" were accepted by the Office until March 1, 2001.

(f) Background of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(c). The specification should set forth the Background of the Invention in two parts:

(1) Field of the Invention: A statement of the field of art to which the invention pertains. This statement may include a paraphrasing of the applicable U.S. patent classification definitions of the subject matter of the claimed invention. This item may also be titled "Technical Field."

(2) Description of the Related Art including information disclosed under 37 CFR 1.97 and 37 CFR 1.98: A description of the related art known to the applicant and including, if applicable, references to specific related art and problems involved in the prior art which are solved by the applicant's invention. This item may also be titled "Background Art."

(g) Brief Summary of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(d). A brief summary or general statement of the invention as set forth in 37 CFR 1.73. The summary is separate and distinct from the abstract and is directed toward the invention rather than the disclosure as a whole. The summary may point out the advantages of the invention or how it solves problems previously existent in the prior art (and preferably indicated in the Background of the Invention). In chemical cases it should point out in general terms the utility of the invention. If possible, the nature and gist of the invention or the inventive concept should be set forth. Objects of the invention should be treated briefly and only to the extent that they contribute to an understanding of the invention.

(h) Brief Description of the Several Views of the Drawing(s): See MPEP § 608.01(f). A reference to and brief description of the drawing(s) as set forth in 37 CFR 1.74.

(i) Detailed Description of the Invention: See MPEP § 608.01(g). A description of the preferred embodiment(s) of the invention as required in 37 CFR 1.71. The description should be as short and specific as is necessary to describe the invention adequately and accurately. Where elements or groups of elements, compounds, and processes, which are conventional and generally widely known in the field of the invention described and their exact nature or type is not necessary for an understanding and use of the invention by a person skilled in the art, they should not be described in detail. However, where particularly complicated subject matter is involved or where the elements, compounds, or processes may not be commonly or widely known in the field, the specification should refer to another patent or readily available publication which adequately describes the subject matter.

1. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities:

(1) Section headings such as “Background of the invention”, “Brief summary of the invention”, “Brief description of the drawings” and “Detailed description of the invention” are required.

(2) The specification should not contain reference to a certain claim number, since the claim number is subject to change.

(3) Specification page 2, replace typo "know" with --known--.

Appropriate corrections are required.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 5 is objected to because of the following informalities:

(1) On line 3, "counter element" lacks antecedent basis. Replace "counter element" with --mating element--.

(2) On line 3, replace the typo "a" with --as--.

Appropriate corrections are required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

> (a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negatived by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claims 1, 4, 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mayer et al. (U. S. Patent No. 4, 241, 973) in view of Maxwell (U. S. Patent No. 2, 880, 403).

Referring to claims 1, 6 and 7, Mayer discloses a connecting sleeve (cable 10, in Figure 1; col. 5, lines 9-28) in which the connecting sleeve is an insulating, elastic

material (14) that is in the form of a tube, characterized in that the connecting sleeve (10) has an outer, electrically conductive surface (grounded outer conductor 13) that is grounded, and an inner, electrically conductive surface (inner conductor 11) to which a voltage potential is applied; and in that the connecting sleeve has a coupling electrode (the second or middle conductor of a triaxial cable, col. 10, lines 49-60) that is imbedded in the insulating material (14).

Note that the recitations " for a bus bar connection that is used to connect two switchboard sections of a gas-insulated switchboard system" (as in claim 1); or "bus bar connection...to connect two switchboard sections of a gas-insulated switchboard system" (as in claim 6); and "Gas-insulated switchboard system, in particular a gas-insulated medium-voltage switchboard system, with at least two switchboard sections that are connected to one another through a bus bar connection" (as in claim 7) have not been given patentable weight because the recitation occurs in the preamble. A preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. See In re Hirao, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and Kropa v. Robie, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88 USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951).

Still referring to claims 1, 6 and 7, Mayer does not specifically disclose that the voltage potential applied to the inner electrically conductive surface is from a bus bar. Maxwell discloses a bus bar (61 in Figure 15) for applying voltage to an inner

conductor. A person of ordinary skill in the art would find it obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Mayer to use a bus bar as taught by Maxwell for applying the voltage potential to the inner conductor, for the purpose of obtaining a simplified overall structure and reduction in cost for the connecting sleeve.

Referring to claim 4, Mayer discloses that the coupling electrode (the second or middle conductor of a triaxial cable, col. 10, lines 49-60) is connected to a plug connector (the cable terminal connector as shown in Figure 1) that is positioned in an opening (the opening for engaging cable 10) that is surrounded by the insulating material (14).

4. Claims 1-4, 6 and 7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kohler (U. S. Patent No. 4, 074, 193) in view of Maxwell (U. S. Patent No. 2, 880, 403).

Referring to claims 1, 6 and 7, Kohler discloses a connecting sleeve (in the Figure) in which the connecting sleeve is an insulating, elastic material (1) that is in the form of a tube, characterized in that the connecting sleeve has an outer, electrically conductive surface (cylindrical electrode 4) that is grounded, and an inner, electrically conductive surface (primary conductor 3) to which a voltage potential is applied (col. 3, lines 45-46); and in that the connecting sleeve has a coupling electrode (18) that is imbedded in the insulating material (1).

Note that the recitations " for a bus bar connection that is used to connect two switchboard sections of a gas-insulated switchboard system" (as in claim 1); or "bus bar

connection...to connect two switchboard sections of a gas-insulated switchboard system" (as in claim 6); and "Gas-insulated switchboard system, in particular a gas-insulated medium-voltage switchboard system, with at least two switchboard sections that are connected to one another through a bus bar connection" (as in claim 7) have not been given patentable weight because the recitation occurs in the preamble. A preamble is generally not accorded any patentable weight where it merely recites the purpose of a process or the intended use of a structure, and where the body of the claim does not depend on the preamble for completeness but, instead, the process steps or structural limitations are able to stand alone. See In re Hirao, 535 F.2d 67, 190 USPQ 15 (CCPA 1976) and Kropa v. Robie, 187 F.2d 150, 152, 88 USPQ 478, 481 (CCPA 1951).

Still referring to claims 1, 6 and 7, Kohler does not specifically disclose that the voltage potential applied to the inner electrically conductive surface is from a bus bar. Maxwell discloses a bus bar (61 in Figure 15) for applying voltage to an inner conductor. A person of ordinary skill in the art would find it obvious at the time the invention was made to modify Koher to use a bus bar as taught by Maxwell for the purpose of obtaining a simplified overall structure and reduction in cost for the connecting sleeve.

Referring to claim 2, Kohler discloses that the coupling electrode (18) has a sensor surface that is tangential to the outer surface (4).

Referring to claim 3, Koher discloses that the coupling electrode (18) is so imbedded in the insulating material (1) that the coupling electrode (18) is electrically insulated from the inner surface (3) and from the outer surface (4), the coupling

electrode (18) having an edge area that overlaps the outer surface, at least in part (the electrode 18 surrounds/overlaps the outside of the cylindrical electrode 4, col. 1, lines 50-51).

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claim 5 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

6. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Amy He whose telephone number is (571) 272-2230. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30am-5pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Diane Lee can be reached on 571-272-2399. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see http://pair-direct.uspto.gov. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

AH
April 13, 2006.

ANJAN DEB
PRIMARY EXAMINER